



CAPSEF *Founded 1974*

Connecticut Association of Private Special Education Facilities

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Testimony before the Education Committee

on

House Bill No. 5447 - AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AUDITOR'S OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS CONCERNING PRIVATE PROVIDERS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2018

The Connecticut Association of Private Special Education Facilities (CAPSEF) is a voluntary association of private schools which provide quality, cost effective, special education and related services to the special needs of children and adolescents (birth to 21 years of age) of Connecticut. CAPSEF schools work with families, public schools, state agencies, other caretakers and providers to implement model programs, that enhance each student's ability to succeed while enabling caregivers to help children in need. CAPSEF represents over 40 programs (which is about 50% of all private special education facilities in CT) serving public school districts and families throughout the entire state of Connecticut.

- I. CAPSEF supports Sec I-A of HB 5447. Contracts between boards of education and private providers are necessary and need to be clearly stated and timely including a level of standardization or uniformity across all district contracts.
- II. CAPSEF member schools are a part of the Special Education continuum of care in our State. The methodology used to determine any and all costs must be clear, accurate and reflect the comprehensive integrated services provided. The diversity and complexity of the students CAPSEF schools serve require specialists not commonly found in the public schools including clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists and specialized medical care. This highest end of the continuum requires a level of integrated care not feasible in the public schools. The districts look to CAPSEF member schools to be in the forefront of treatment innovation.
- III. School districts across the state have already developed in-district alternative programs designed to meet the needs of students that districts have not traditionally been able to serve. This in turn has meant that only the most significantly impaired and most complex students are being referred to the CAPSEF member schools; this increase in the severity and complexity of students requiring out of district placement has led to a higher level of training, specialization, oversight, risk management, and expertise to meet these needs.
- IV. CAPSEF member schools requests to participate in a work group with all the essential parties at the table including CAPSEF members, SDE, LEA's, State auditors and RESC providers to develop a methodology by which to conduct a special education cost analysis prior to the development of a rate schedule.
- V. Inclusion of the RESC programs in all matters pertaining to this Bill is essential to developing a comprehensive and balanced process that ensures accountability across programs that receive public funds.

In summary, CAPSEF members appreciate and share the concern for the impact on our most vulnerable populations of the fiscal insecurities of our times. We would offer our energy; expertise and commitment to the formation of a work group to help enhance the knowledge necessary to address the issues outlined in House Bill 5447.